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# **Common Questions about NBME® CBSE/CBSSA Score Report Changes**

**For Educators**

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## COMPREHENSIVE BASIC SCIENCE EXAM (CBSE) COMMON QUESTIONS

NBME's Medical School Services team explored how scores from our Comprehensive Basic Science Subject Exams could best support educator's needs to understand learner readiness for USMLE® Step 1, which will move to pass/fail reporting starting from January 26, 2022. Answers to common questions asked about our recent announcement are available below to help with the CBSE score reporting transition planned for February 23, 2022.

### What is changing on the CBSE score reports?

#### *Score Reports for Examinees*

The overall, 3-digit score is being replaced by an equated percent correct score that represents the percentage of content mastered. In addition, the report will show a student's estimated probability of passing if they take USMLE Step 1 within one week (i.e., with a similar level of knowledge as when they took CBSEs). This estimated probability will be calculated based on a large group of examinees who tested within one week of taking Step 1 for the first time.

For each content area, the new report will include an equated percent correct score and the average equated percent correct score for a Step 1 comparison group. The boxes indicating whether content area performance was lower, the same, or higher than one's overall performance are going away.

#### What's not changing?

- There will still be a histogram depicting overall performance. It will show the distribution of equated percent correct scores for a national cohort, with lines indicating the student's specific score and the low-pass range for Step 1, which corresponds to performance that is above but near the passing standard.
- All content areas are staying the same. The percentage of the test comprised by each content area will continue being reported.
- The boxes indicating whether performance was lower, average, or higher in relation to a Step 1 comparison group will still be provided.

Providing an equated percent correct score for CBSEs along with an estimated probability of passing Step 1 was a way to continue reporting a score while staying aligned with the Step 1 move to pass/fail. We heard from students that receiving an overall CBSE score was important, and we selected equated percent correct scores based on the familiarity of the 0-100 scale. Like the previous 3-digit scores, equated percent correct scores can be used to track performance over time for students who take CBSEs more than once.

The new equated percent correct scores that will be reported for each content area can help provide more detail about areas of strength and weakness, and the boxes that will continue being reported are designed to help students interpret their results as accurately as possible.

#### *Score Reports for Schools*

**NEW:** When the new CBSE Examinee Report is released, the Roster Report and downloadable roster file will also be updated to show total equated percent correct scores instead of 3-digit scores.

#### What else will change?

The School Summary Profile Report, which shows a visual summary of group-level performance using profile bands, will be discontinued.

- The downloadable roster file in MyNBME<sup>SM</sup> Services Portal will be updated to include content area equated percent correct scores for each student. A key advantage of content area equated percent correct scores is that they are comparable regardless of which CBSE form

students take, supporting comparisons of content area performance over time and across groups. The content area p-values provided on the current Content Area Item Analysis Summary Report are not directly comparable across forms.

#### What's not changing?

Between now and mid-April, the Content Area Item Analysis Summary Report and the Content Area Item Analysis Report (Keyword Report) will continue being provided with no changes. As a reminder, the Content Area Item Analysis Summary Report offers a statistical summary of group-level performance. There will be no changes to the item-level information reported.

An additional change will be implemented in mid-April to provide educators with improved content area feedback in a more convenient format.

- The Content Area Item Analysis Summary Report will be updated and renamed to Content Area Summary Report. For each content area, it will display the average equated percent correct score and standard deviation for the current administration, the Step 1 comparison group average equated percent correct score and standard deviation, the difference in the two averages, and the percentage of items on the test that contribute to the content area (as a range).

#### When will the new CBSE score reports be released?

The new score reports with equated percent correct scores will be released on February 23, 2022.

For orders administered at your institution beginning February 21 and moving forward, student(s) will receive the new score reports.

For Prometric testing, any order that has a 14-day testing window that ends on or before **February 20<sup>th</sup>** will get the score report with the three-digit score. And for any order that has a 14-day testing window that ends on or after **February 21<sup>st</sup>**, student(s) will get the new score reports.

#### Will CBSEs still report a 3-digit score? If not, why are CBSEs no longer reporting a 3-digit score?

No, the 3-digit score corresponding to the USMLE Step 1 score scale will not be reported because Step 1 scores will no longer be reported. The USMLE program views the transition to Step 1 pass/fail reporting as an important first step toward facilitating broader, system-wide changes to improve the transition from undergraduate to graduate medical education. However, we will be providing resources for schools to help ensure minimum disruption during this transition. You can view and download a conversion table, which links the new equated percent correct score to the equivalent three-digit score, through the MyNBME<sup>SM</sup> Services Portal.

#### Will CBSEs still report a numeric score?

CBSEs will soon provide an equated percent correct score that represents the percentage of content mastered. Equated percent correct scores are statistically adjusted to account for slight variations in exam form difficulty, so they can be used to track performance over time if your students take CBSEs more than once. In addition, the CBSE report will provide their estimated probability of passing if they take Step 1 within one week (i.e., with a similar level of knowledge as when they took CBSEs).

#### Why will CBSEs still report numeric scores after Step 1 changes to pass/fail only reporting?

Ongoing market research has demonstrated that students and faculty value numeric scores on CBSE score reports, and NBME will continue to provide this information along with an estimated probability of passing Step 1 to help gauge readiness for the examination.

**What scores on the equated percent correct scale correspond to the USMLE Step 1 low-pass range?**

The low-pass range goes from 62 to 68 on the equated percent correct scale. This range represents CBSE scores corresponding to Step 1 performance starting at the passing standard plus 2 standard errors of measurement.

**How can I locate my school's CBSE Minimum Passing Score (MPS) on the new Equated Percent Correct (EPC) scale?**

Many schools set a minimum passing score on CBSE and will need to either locate their current minimum passing score on the new equated percent correct scale or set a new minimum passing score because of the change in the Step 1 passing standard that takes effect on January 26, 2022. You have access to a PDF and downloadable conversion table in the MyNBME Services Portal. The table links the equated percent correct score to the equivalent three-digit score.

**Will I be able to compare my students' equated percent correct scores to 3-digit scores?**

You will be able to compare your students' performance on CBSEs to a range representing low passing performance on Step 1. You will also be able to compare their content area performance to the performance of a Step 1 comparison group based on content area equated percent correct scores (new) and boxes indicating whether their performance was statistically lower, about the same, or higher than the performance of the comparison group. A direct comparison of their previous 3-digit score to the new equated percent correct score scale will be possible by accessing the conversion table on the MyNBME Services Portal.

**Why isn't there an approximate equivalent equated percent correct score in the score conversion table for every 3-digit score?**

There is not an approximate equivalent equated percent correct score for every 3-digit score because the 3-digit score scale has more possible score values than the equated percent correct score scale. If you need to locate the approximate equivalent equated percent correct score for a 3-digit score that is not shown in the conversion table, you should use the score that corresponds to the next highest 3-digit score as the approximate equivalent equated percent correct score.

**Are the new equated percent correct scores the same as the old 2-digit scaled scores that were reported for CBSE before the transition to Step 1 3-digit scores in 2019?**

No, the new equated percent correct scores are calculated differently and are interpreted differently than the old 2-digit scores. The new equated percent correct scores should not be compared to the old 2-digit scores reported prior to 2019.

**May I share the CBSE conversion table with my students?**

No, the conversion table is not intended to be shared with students. It was created and provided to help faculty and learning specialists adjust during the transition from the 3-digit scores to equated percent correct (EPC) scores.

**What does equated mean?**

Equating is a statistical procedure that adjusts scores for slight variations in exam form difficulty so all scores are comparable regardless of which exam form is taken.

**What are the benefits of an equated percent correct score?**

Equated percent correct scores tell you how much of the content your students mastered using the familiar 0-100 scale so you can easily understand their performance, including areas of strength and weakness. The 3-digit scores did not provide this type of criterion-referenced information. Like the 3-digit

scores, equated percent correct scores can be used to track performance over time if students take CBSEs more than once.

**How does equated percent correct differ from classic percent correct?**

Equated percent correct scores are statistically adjusted to account for slight variations in exam form difficulty, so they can support more accurate comparisons than unadjusted percent correct scores.

**Will the new CBSE score reports provide information on my students' readiness/likelihood of passing USMLE Step 1?**

Yes, the new CBSE score reports will allow you to compare their score to a range representing low passing performance on Step 1 and will also provide an estimated probability of passing Step 1 if testing within one week of their CBSE attempt.

**Will the normative information for CBSE change?**

Norm tables will be provided for the existing norm groups based on equated percent correct scores instead of 3-digit scale scores.